

Section II. Space Needle Inventory and Assessment Results

The following section discusses the data gathered on potential viewing sites of the Space Needle. It assesses these sites against the three outlined view factors. From this review, the final list of unobstructed view sites was developed. Public places that did not rate a “high” score on the matrix were due largely to lack of ADA accessibility standards, limited public amenities, or problematic—noise, glare disturbances. Places that would likely have view blockage from potential development were also rated. These sites ranked either “medium” or “low” depending on the extent of mitigation needed to protect the view. A matrix is located at the beginning of Section III that summarizes these view ratings.

Factor 1.
Inventory and assessment
of 2 ½ mile range and
good (¾ to full) view
of the Space Needle.

SEPA Sites

Initial research was conducted of the Space Needle from all eighty-six SEPA listed view protection sites as found in the SEPA View Protection Policies 25.05.675. During the late 1970s/early 1980s, this site list was first developed and based on environmental view protection criteria. There is no documentation as to why some public sites may have been selected over others. However, the list does provide a representative number of view sites throughout the city. Of these sites, thirty-five provide some view of the Space Needle. Twenty sites were within the 2½ mile view range, and of these, ten sites provided a full (from ¾ to all) view of the structure:

Alki Park (Duwamish Head)
Bhy Kracke Park
Four Columns Park (Boren-Pike/Pine Place)
Gasworks Park
Hamilton Viewpoint
Kerry Viewpoint

Myrtle Edwards Park
Newton Street End Park
Seacrest Park (Harbor Vista Park)
Volunteer Park Tower

Note: Newton Street End Park and Volunteer Park Tower were eventually dropped due to lack of accessibility.

Additional Public Places

In addition to the SEPA sites, other public places were also inventoried and assessed. While by no means comprehensive, the assessment does provide examples of other public property considered for possible view protection of the Space Needle.

Using the view amenities criteria to narrow the possibilities, ten additional public areas were selected, again roughly within a 2 ½ mile radius of the structure and all with good views of the Space Needle. Four are parks/playfields: Cascade Playfield, Denny Park, South Lake Union Park, and Volunteer Park. Four are city-owned properties: City Light Broad Street Substation, Seattle Center, Parks Maintenance Division Facility, and the waterfront trolley car barn parcel (part of proposed Olympic Sculpture Park). Street rights-of-way/ “pocket parks” are located on Third Avenue at Broad St., and Aurora Ave. at Broad St.

Based on the ability to see a 400’ foot framed view of the Space Needle from these various view points, the angles of the view corridors measured anywhere from 1.4 to 18 degrees.

Factor 2.
View points and viewing amenities

Amenity standards or view quality criteria were established to select viewpoints where enjoyment of views is enhanced. Informal interviews of park users, urban design principles, and view criteria from other cities were only some of the elements used to help define why people

enjoy certain locations for views. While additional research could expand the amenity criteria, the standards developed in this case provided a reasonable basis to begin view analysis.

Of all the potential public sites (SEPA sites plus additional public places), the following nine places met the objectives of the view quality criteria. The park typology used by DPR is also indicated:

1. **Alki Beach Park** (Duwamish Head). A Neighborhood Park - Alki Beach neighborhood, Harbor Ave. at SW California Place.
2. **Bhy Kracke Park.** A Neighborhood Park - Queen Anne neighborhood, Bigelow North and Comstock Place.
3. **Gasworks Park.** A Regional Park - Wallingford neighborhood, 2000 N. Northlake Way.
4. **Hamilton View Point.** A Community Park - Admiral neighborhood, California Ave. SW.
5. **Kerry Park View Point** A Regional Park - Queen Anne neighborhood, W. Highland and Second Avenue West.
6. **Myrtle Edwards Park.** A Regional Park - Lower Queen Anne neighborhood, Elliott Bay waterfront.
7. **Seacrest Park.** A Regional Park - Harbor Avenue SW vicinity.
8. **Seattle Center** - Lower Queen Anne Hill neighborhood, Broad St., Mercer St., 2nd Ave.
9. **Volunteer Park.** A Regional Park - Capitol Hill neighborhood.

Factor 3. View Corridor Impacts

Using 3-D ArcView analysis and the City's Geographical Information System (GIS) data, build-out views from the various public viewpoints were created.

Based on current zoning these images show potential view impacts to the Space Needle. Some views, particularly ones with viewpoints at high topography levels, appear minimally affected. Others, at lower topography levels and located near parcels zoned for denser development, illustrate more problematic view corridors showing degraded or even obstructed views. ArcView analysis does not indicate what will actually be constructed but merely provides an idea of potential heights/bulk and comparisons to other city blocks. Specific parcels within these view corridors are identified by the King County Assessor's Parcel Identification Number and highlighted indicating future projects may be conditioned for view protection compliance.

Recently constructed buildings may not appear in the current 3-D view model. The database for identifying exact viewpoints is the horizontal Datum: North American Datum of 1981, 1991 adjustment, and for the vertical, the North American Vertical Datum of 1988.

All nine high-rated viewpoints, that met the view quality criteria, indicate relatively little impact on Space Needle views from future development. The following four sites, however, indicate degraded views of the Space Needle with varying degrees of view blockage. These sites received medium or low ratings based primarily on the potential for eroded views. They are further discussed in the individual site reviews.

Cascade Playfield - Cascade neighborhood park.

Four Columns Park - Pike/Pine neighborhood park

Olympic Sculpture Park (proposed) - Belltown neighborhood

South Lake Union Park - South Lake Union neighborhood park.